

FY 2003 MID-PHASE INPUT OPPORTUNITY REPORT



MARCH 2003



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Valley Metro Rail Communications Specialist Alexandra Patane explains speaks with residents about the Valley's planned light rail transit system at a recent "MAG at the Mall" held at Metrocenter on Saturday, March 1, 2003. MAG, ADOT, Valley Metro and Valley Metro Rail typically join forces when it comes to public involvement as part of a regionally coordinated transportation planning process.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

The Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) continues to emphasize public involvement in the metropolitan transportation planning process. The intent of the public involvement provisions in TEA-21 is to increase public awareness and involvement in transportation planning and programming. TEA-21 requires that the metropolitan planning organization work cooperatively with the state department of transportation and the regional transit operator to provide citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of transportation agency employees, freight shippers, private providers of transportation, representatives of users of public transit, and other interested parties a reasonable opportunity to comment on proposed transportation plans and programs.

The Mid-Phase Input Opportunity was conducted from the middle of January through March, 2003. The Mid-Phase generally provides opportunity for input on draft plan analysis for the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and Long Range Transportation Plan (Plan). Citizens are invited to provide comments and suggestions for the Valley's transportation system. The input is then collected and entered into the Mid-Phase Input Opportunity Report, which is presented to MAG Management Committee and Regional Council for review and consideration. However, because MAG is not programming federal funds this year, the public input process has been slightly altered. MAG will concentrate on educating the residents of its member agencies on its role as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for this region. MAG will also provide an overview of the new Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). Any input received during this time will be provided to the managing consultant of the RTP and included in the development of the new plan.

INPUT OPPORTUNITIES

Various forums for input were used during the FY 2003 Mid-Phase Input Opportunity. The Mid-Phase Input Opportunity began with a freeway opening on Saturday, January 11, 2003 along the Loop 202. MAG, ADOT, and Valley Metro/RPTA staff were on hand during the freeway opening to answer questions about freeways, light rail and bus service. Residents were also given a survey and asked about the most important transportation issues facing the Valley.

On Saturday, February 1, 2003, MAG staffed a booth at the Northwest Black History Festival in Peoria. Staff responded to comments and answered questions by festival participants. On Saturday, February 8, 2003, MAG staff was again on hand to respond to citizen comments, answer questions and take down project suggestions during the Black Heritage Festival in Phoenix. MAG staff also made a small group presentation during this phase to the Association of Equipment Distributors of America on Friday, February 14, 2003. MAG was also active in soliciting comments and suggestions from Title VI communities, such as during the Seminar in Spanish and Business Expo on February 6, 2003, the Paradise Valley Latino Institute on February 8, 2003 and the Glendale Latino Institute on February 22, 2003. The Latino Institute is a Spanish-speaking forum for businesses and non-profit organizations to provide residents with information on a wide range of topics. MAG staff also met with the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and participated in the Martin Luther King , Jr. festival in Phoenix on January 20, 2003.

MAG, ADOT, Valley Metro/RPTA and Valley Metro Rail also co-hosted a “MAG at the Mall” event on Saturday, March 1, 2003 and a Joint Agency Transportation Open House and Public Hearing on Thursday, March 6, 2003.

LOCATIONS

The Mid-Phase meetings and events were held to accommodate citizens in the MAG region. The specific locations, dates and times of just a few of the meetings and events are shown below. Meeting and event times were varied in an attempt to accommodate as many citizens as possible. Except for the open house and public hearing, all of the meetings and events were off-site and in different parts of the Valley.

Loop 202 Freeway Opening

Gilbert to Higley section
Saturday, January 11, 2003
Mesa
9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Seminar in Spanish and Business Expo

Phoenix
February 6, 2003
Phoenix Civic Plaza
1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Northwest Black History Festival

Peoria
Saturday, February 1, 2003
Peoria Municipal Complex
11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Paradise Valley Latino Institute

Paradise Valley
February 8, 2003
Paradise Valley Community Center
10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Black Heritage Festival

Phoenix

Saturday, February 8, 2003

Phoenix Symphony Hall Terrace

3:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

**Association of Equipment
Distributors of America**

Phoenix

Friday, February 14, 2003

Arizona Country Club

11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Glendale Latino Institute

Glendale

February 22, 2003

Glendale Community College

1:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

MAG at the Mall

Phoenix

Saturday, March 1, 2003

Metrocenter Mall

11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

**Joint Agency Transportation
Open House and Public Hearing**

Phoenix

Thursday, March 6, 2003

MAG offices

Open House – 12:00 p.m.

Hearing – 1:00 p.m.

All of these public events were scheduled in venues that are transit accessible and comply with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act. In addition, Spanish language material, sign language interpretation, alternate materials, and FM/Infrared Listening Devices were available upon request.

SUMMARY OF INPUT

This section provides a summary of comments obtained during the Mid-Phase public involvement opportunities. Correspondence received during the continuous involvement phase of MAG's transportation public involvement process is included in Appendix B.

Loop 202 Freeway Opening

- No more golf course, preserve the desert.
- Improve bus service.
- Continue fantastic work on the freeways.
- Need an express bus line with park-and-ride lots.
- This area needs a mass transit and rail system.
- Need more promotion of hybrid fuel cars.
- Install cameras at freeway ramps to decrease speeds.
- Widen and connect the freeways.
- Get rid of stop lights, have more one-way streets.
- Need a bus to Apache Junction.
- Need more buses and some commuter rail.
- Build infrastructure before allowing build-out.

Northwest Black History Festival

- More bus routes at an affordable cost.
- Extend the transportation system to the rural areas.
- More buses in Peoria and Happy Valley.
- There needs to be an underground rail system that extends from the Northwest to the East Valley.

Seminar in Spanish and Business Expo

- Add more buses to the system.
- Eliminate HOV lanes. They are not needed.
- Develop light rail.
- Add more bus routes further out in the West Valley.
- More buses and more frequent routes.
- Improve the highways; add more buses.
- Add more routes, increase "services."
- Increase security and law enforcement, improve transportation facilities.
- Improve access to South Mountain and Ahwatukee areas.
- More buses.
- Rapid bus system should be implemented.

- Get “smoky old cars” off the road and create a specific lane for trucks with cargo.
- Add more buses and start light rail.
- More bus routes where none are available now; add light rail.
- Better cars.
- We need more bus routes and extended service hours.
- More transportation buses.
- More police officers in view to help minimize traffic violations.
- Increase number of buses.
- Widen freeways.
- More state funds for transportation; Mesa has no Sunday bus service because of no money.
- We need light rail as soon as possible.
- Build more highways.
- Place large route maps and connecting routes at bus stops.
- Extend public transportation to more areas.
- More funding for cars, trains, transportation. Population increasing, but transportation lagging.
- More cleanliness and security.
- Faster transit system, like Metro or light rail.
- Better roads, better bus service.
- Better buses.
- More options in transportation.
- More buses.
- More bus services in rural areas.

Paradise Valley Latino Institute

- Better buses and improved bus service.
- Have a plan.
- More buses.
- We need light rail.
- Better time schedule.
- More freeways.
- Add buses.
- We need more transportation services everyday, especially in the afternoons.
- More buses running longer.
- We need 24-hour bus service.
- We need light rail.
- We need more roads and highways.

- A transit system that provides transportation to and from work for those who have no vehicles as well as those who are concerned for the environment.
- Light rail.
- More frequent bus schedule.
- More hours of bus service.

Black Heritage Festival

- Build a better public transportation system.
- We need a regional bus system.
- We need a 24-hour bus system that runs seven days a week.
- More mass transit and carpooling.

Glendale Latino Institute

- More buses, better schedule for benefit of families.
- More frequency in the routes. Buses take too long now.
- Increase frequency and add routes.
- Increase present routes.
- We need a rail system.
- Improve and extend the routes and increase the bus frequency.
- More courteous drivers, more safety for drivers.
- More accessible bus lines, more hours of service.
- Employer incentives for public transit use.
- Bus routes every 15 minutes.
- More bus routes for the West and North areas of the Valley.
- A railway system.
- More buses.
- More buses and more frequent routes between 7 and 9 a.m.
- Build light rail.

MAG at the Mall

- Rational land use planning and the elimination of the subsidies that promote sprawl.
- More buses in Glendale.
- More bus seats.
- Since the Valley is growing, we need to widen the freeways and have more bus routes.
- More freeways and a better and faster way to get places.
- Enforce speed limits.
- Make the bus system go more places.
- Get the rail system up and running, less pollution.
- Improve street drainage.

- Need more left yield turns.
- Need a rail system and better light timing.
- More law enforcement presence.
- Street maintenance.
- Freeways with half-mile overpasses.

I. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS

INTRODUCTION

The Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) continues to emphasize public involvement in the metropolitan transportation planning process. The intent of the public involvement provisions in TEA-21 is to increase public awareness and involvement in transportation planning and programming. TEA-21 requires that the metropolitan planning organization work cooperatively with the state department of transportation and the regional transit operator to provide citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of transportation agency employees, freight shippers, private providers of transportation, representatives of users of public transit, and other interested parties a reasonable opportunity to comment on proposed transportation plans and programs.

In September 1994, the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) Regional Council adopted a public involvement process for receiving public opinion, comment and suggestions on transportation planning

The MAG Process for Public Involvement receives public opinion in accord with federal requirements, and provides opportunities for early and continuing involvement in the transportation planning and programming process.

and programming in the MAG region, which is in accord with TEA-21 requirements. This process provides complete information on transportation plans, timely public notice, full public access to key decisions, and opportunities for early and continuing involvement in the planning process.

The public involvement process is divided into four phases: Early Phase, Mid-Phase, Final Phase and continuous involvement. The Early Phase meetings ensure early involvement of the public in the development of these plans and programs. This year, the Early Phase input opportunity was conducted from August through October, 2002. The results of these meetings are included in the *FY 2003 Early Phase Input Opportunity Report* (October, 2002).

The Mid-Phase process provides for input on initial plan analysis for the draft TIP and Plan, and includes a public hearing on regional transportation issues. The Mid-Phase was conducted from the middle of January through March, 2003. The results of the Mid-Phase Input Opportunity are included in this document, the *FY 2003 Mid-Phase Input Opportunity Report* (March, 2003). The Final Phase provides an opportunity for final comment on the TIP, Plan and Air Quality Conformity Analysis, and generally occurs upon the completion of the

air quality conformity analysis in the summer. The results of the Final Phase Input Opportunity will be included in the *FY 2003 Final Phase Input Opportunity Report* (July 2003). In addition, continuous outreach is conducted throughout the annual update process and includes activities such as presentations to community and civic groups, distributing press releases and newsletters, and coordinating with the Citizens Transportation Oversight Committee (CTOC).

ENHANCED PUBLIC OUTREACH PROCESS

In July 1998, the Regional Council recommended that the process for programming federal transportation funds be enhanced. These enhancements include a more proactive community outreach process and the development of early guidelines to help select transportation projects within resource limits. The proactive community outreach process led to an enhanced public involvement process beginning with the FY 1999 Public Involvement Program. The enhanced public involvement process involves transportation stakeholders as outlined in TEA-21 and includes input from Title VI stakeholders (minority populations and low-income populations). The input received during the enhanced input opportunity has been incorporated in the development of early guidelines to guide project selection for the TIP and Plan.

Additional changes in planning and programming responsibilities were prompted by the passage of TEA-21. As a result, ADOT hosted a meeting of regional planning organizations to suggest changes that would benefit the planning and programming process throughout Arizona. The meeting was held in Casa Grande in April, 1999 and was attended by representatives of Metropolitan Planning Organizations, Councils of Government, ADOT and Valley Metro. All participants agreed to several guiding principles to help develop and integrate state and regional transportation plans and programs. In the past, development of the MAG TIP, MAG Long Range Plan, Surface Transportation Program (STP) and State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) were on different schedules – which was confusing to members of the public. With changes included in the guiding principles adopted at the April meeting, the two planning and programming processes have been combined. (See Table 1).

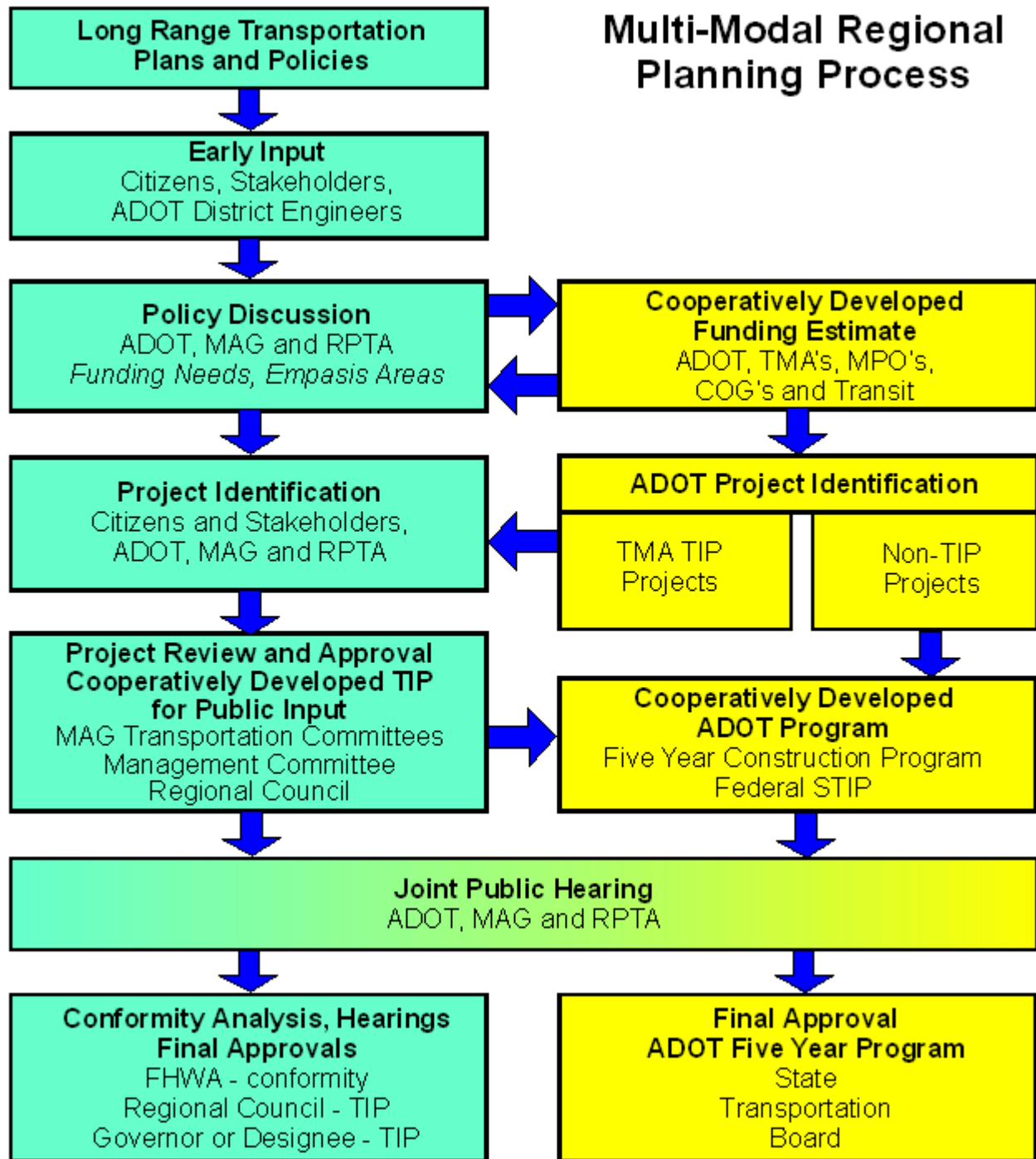


Table 1: Development Process for ADOT Five-Year Program, MAG TIP, MAG LRTP, and ADOT Life Cycle Program (Joint Planning Process)

- * **TMA:** Transportation Management Area
- * **FHWA:** Federal Highway Administration
- * **RPTA:** Regional Public Transportation Authority
- * **COG:** Council of Governments
- * **MPO:** Metropolitan Planning Organization

**Guiding Principles
New Arizona Transportation Planning and Programming Process
Casa Grande Resolves**

- ◆ One multi-modal transportation planning process for each region that is seamless to the public; includes early and regular dialogue and interaction at the state and regional level; and recognizes the needs of state, local and tribal governments, and regional organizations.
- ◆ Process that encourages early and frequent public participation and stakeholder involvement and that meets the requirements of TEA-21 and other state and federal planning requirements.
- ◆ The policy and transportation objectives of the state, regional and local plans will form the foundation of the Statewide Long Range Transportation Plan.
- ◆ The Statewide Transportation Plan and Programs will be based on clearly defined and agreed to information and assumptions including the resources available, performance measures, and other technical information.
- ◆ Each project programmed shall be linked to the Statewide Long Range Transportation Plan with each project selected to achieve one or more of the Plan objectives, and the program represents an equitable allocation of resources.
- ◆ Implementation of the Plan and Program shall be monitored using a common database of regularly updated program information and allocations.
- ◆ There is a shared responsibility by state, local and tribal governments, and regional organizations to ensure that Plan and Program implementation meet the transportation needs of the people of Arizona.

Table 2: Casa Grande Resolves

PUBLICITY

The public was informed of Mid-Phase public involvement events through a variety of methods. The “MAG at the Mall” and Joint Agency Transportation Open House and Public Hearing were announced with a targeted mailing, as well as a press release that is distributed to print and electronic media outlets around the Valley. Other techniques that are used to announce meetings and events include display ads in the largest circulation newspaper (the *Arizona Republic*), distribution of more than 3,000 brochures, a press release faxed to print and electronic media in the region, articles in MAG newsletters, and other targeted mailings.

CONTINUOUS INVOLVEMENT

As part of the continuous outreach process, MAG staff participated in a number of events since the completion of the FY 2002 Early Phase Input Opportunity. These activities included:

- ◆ Continued involvement with the Citizens Transportation Oversight Committee (CTOC).
- ◆ Continued MAG membership and involvement with several civic organizations in the region including the Phoenix Chamber of Commerce, Valley Forward, Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Hispanic Community Forum and The League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC).
- ◆ Continued consideration of input received by the MAG Human Services Planning Program in its public outreach process.
- ◆ Continued community outreach to Title VI/Environmental Justice populations, utilizing the MAG Community Outreach Specialist and MAG Disability Outreach Associate.

Additional outreach activities included updating the MAG Web site at www.mag.maricopa.gov. The site provides information on MAG committees and issues of regional importance, as well as access to electronic documents and links to member agencies. The site also provides a Spanish language link. Visitors to the site may provide feedback through various project pages. Staff contact information is provided for specific projects. Users may also send comments or questions via e-mail to mag@mag.maricopa.gov. In addition, each quarter MAG distributes a newsletter, *MAGAZine*, which includes information about MAG activities and the issues and concerns of the cities, towns and tribal communities of Maricopa County. Ongoing coordination with ADOT, Valley Metro/RPTA, Valley Metro Rail and CTOC have also led to refinements in the public involvement process.

CORRESPONDENCE/COMMENTS

Correspondence received from the public since the FY 2003 Early Phase Input Opportunity Report has been compiled and is contained in Appendix B.

II. PUBLIC HEARING/MEETING COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

INTRODUCTION

This section is organized by meeting/event location and includes written comments received during the Mid-Phase public input opportunity. Comments received at Mid-Phase Management Committee and Regional Council meetings are listed below as well as comments received at the open house/public hearing. For a full transcript of the presentations provided and comments received at the public hearing, see the transcript under Section III of this report.

Comments received at January 29, 2003 Regional Council meeting

Comments made by William “Blue” Crowley, Citizen

Comment: A light rail station with express bus terminal on I-10 is not on the horizon. Since 1987, the terminal has sat unfinished. The City of Phoenix should abandon the terminal to the state.

Response: The I-10 Deck Park tunnel project was to serve expansion of the express bus system. The defeat of various funding referenda to expand regional bus services has negatively affected the development of the bus tunnel/station. At present, there does not appear to be sufficient funding for the State to develop the I-10 express terminal. Although the source of transit funding is fairly complex to explain, most funding for transit service is provided by city general funds and city sales taxes.

Comment: Page one of the Grand Avenue Corridor Study report states that motorized traffic is the primary focus; however, TEA-21 guidelines state that pedestrian and bicycle should be the first consideration.

Response: Providing bicycle lanes is important. The MAG Regional Bicycle Plan, adopted by the Regional Council, does support creating bicycle lanes. For example, Objective 2 under the Engineering and Planning Goal states: “Restripe existing roadways, when feasible, to gain space for bike lanes or edgeline buffer zones. Widen curb lanes during reconstruction or repaving to provide space for bike lanes or edgeline buffer zones. Include bicycle lanes in all new arterial roadway construction and selected collector street construction. One way to accomplish this on a consistent basis is to adopt street cross sections with space for bike

lanes.” Safety considerations for bicyclists are also an important consideration. Right-of-Way widths for many streets are very limited, including many portions of Grand Avenue, which make the provision of safe, dedicated and continuous bicycle lanes difficult.

Comment: When eight agenda items are combined into one three-minute comment period, you are denying access rather than opening the (public involvement) process.

Response: MAG conducts meetings in accord with open meeting laws. Meetings of technical committees, working groups, the Management Committee and Regional Council are open to the public. Notices for these meetings are posted at least 24 hours in advance.

The Open Meeting Law is contained in the Arizona Revised Statutes, ARS 38-431.01. The Open Meeting Law states, in part:

A. All meetings of any public body shall be public meetings and all persons so desiring shall be permitted to attend and listen to the deliberations and proceedings. All legal action of public bodies shall occur during a public meeting.

Although MAG provides for public comment at its public meetings, it is important to note that the Open Meeting Law states that a public body **may** make an open call to the public during a public meeting; it does not guarantee that a member of the public has a right to speak during a public meeting.

Comments made by Bob McKnight, Citizen

Comment: I would like to see an organizational chart showing the jobs and responsibilities of all working on the trolley, especially the consultants. There has been \$34 to \$38 million spent on preliminary engineering and I don't know what's been done.

Response: The Central Phoenix/East Valley Light Rail Transit Project is a complex undertaking by a partnership between the Cities of Phoenix, Tempe and Mesa, MAG and the Federal Transit Administration. The Valley Metro/Regional Public Transportation Authority (RPTA) oversees the project. It is very typical of government entities to hire consultant teams to execute such projects.

Since the project has many partners, knowing which staff person to contact can be confusing. We recommend that you visit or call the project community office 411 North Central Avenue, Suite 195, in downtown Phoenix. The hotline phone number is (602) 534-1807.

Comment: They should have a backup plan (the light rail agency) if federal funding does not come through.

Response: The Valley's light rail system is currently in the preliminary engineering and planning stage. To date, the project has been allocated \$50+ million in federal funding - the second highest amount of any rail system nationwide in the same design phase. Only Washington D.C. has received more federal funding. Among the 16 projects that have received less funding than the Central Phoenix/East Valley Light Rail Transit Project are Philadelphia, Charlotte, Cincinnati, Columbus, Orange County and Pittsburgh.

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has thoroughly evaluated the Valley's light rail project and given it a "Highly" recommended rating - one of only two projects out of sixty (60) in the nation to receive this federal seal of approval that means the project is recommended for federal funding.

The project is not yet far enough through the design process to be eligible for a long-term federal funding commitment, called a Full Funding Grant Agreement (FFGA). The FFGA guarantees a specific total federal funding amount for the light rail project and puts it at the top of the list for funding in the federal appropriations process. Project officials expect to receive an FFGA in early 2004.

The project's participating cities have committed to funding the project through the Final Design phase prior to receiving a Full Funding Grant Agreement – including beginning to purchase needed properties in Phoenix and Tempe beginning this year.

Comment: The trolley cannot go beneath Washington Street the way it is presently configured.

Response: Valley Metro Rail is currently preparing a formal response to this question and will have a written response available in an addendum to this report for the Regional Council meeting on March 26, 2003.

Comments made by DD Barker, Citizen

Comment: Mr. Joe Ryan feels as though he has been shut out of the proactive government (public involvement) process at MAG.

Response: MAG advertises its outreach events in a variety of ways. Display ads are placed in the *Arizona Republic*, as well as the *Arizona Informant* and *Prensa Hispana*. Flyers are sent out to approximately 3,000 people who are a part of the MAG public involvement

mailing list. Press releases are also sent out to more than 60 newspapers, radio and television stations around the Valley. In addition, MAG continues to examine other ways that it can advertise its outreach events. MAG has an adopted public process for receiving public input, comment and suggestions on transportation planning and programming in the MAG region that is in accord with federal requirements and exceeds nearly all state and federal requirements. This process is intended to provide complete information on transportation plans, timely public notice, full public access to key decisions, and opportunities for early and continuing involvement in the process for all segments of the region's population, including Title VI and Environmental Justice communities.

Comments made by Dianne Post, Citizen

Comment: There are higher priorities than re-paving the freeways with rubberized asphalt. Human needs far surpass the need for less noise.

Response: ADOT is currently preparing a formal response to this question and will have a written response available in an addendum to this report for the Regional Council meeting on March 26, 2003.

Comments received at February 12, 2003 Management Committee meeting

Comments made by William "Blue" Crowley, Citizen

Comment: When you eliminate public input, you are not in tune with federal regulations. If an item is not on the agenda for action, the public is not allowed to comment.

Response: Both Management Committee and Regional Council provide for three opportunities for public comment. These opportunities include the Call to the Audience, Approval of the Consent Agenda and Action Items. In addition, MAG conducts meetings in accord with open meeting laws. Meetings of technical committees, working groups, the Management Committee and Regional Council are open to the public. Notices for these meetings are posted at least 24 hours in advance.

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Comment: The bus stops do not meet the standards. There should be a shelter and bench for 32 daily boardings.

Response: Due to several factors such as availability of funds, site geometries, and site activity, the Valley Metro/RPTA and its member agencies have adopted bus stop amenity policies. A scoring system has been developed that considers citizen requests, distribution of improvements, waiting time for bus, exposure to elements, activity, and special needs. Bus stop locations are qualified for site amenity upgrades upon attaining a pre-determined threshold score.

Comment: Each city needs a circulator and connector systems.

Response: The Valley Metro/RPTA has initiated a Regional Transit System (RTS) Study to identify transit needs for the next several decades. Begun in early 2002, the study will develop a fiscally-constrained regional plan for Maricopa County that would be implemented over the next 20 years. The study has developed a methodology to estimate future requirements for each component of a regional transit system, such as local and express bus, dial-a-ride, vanpool and rural transit options. Circulators can be an important way to meet localized transit need in communities. The study also identifies regional connections that connect transit riders across city boundaries, and these connections are consistent with the planning work of the MAG High Capacity Transit Plan. The study is expected to be completed in the next few months. Information on the RTS Study can be found at www.ValleyTransitPlan.org.

Comment: Adding rubberized asphalt to the system is a problem because it lasts only six years, while concrete lasts 10 years.

Response: ADOT is currently preparing a formal response to this question and will have a written response available in an addendum to this report for the Regional Council meeting on March 26, 2003.

Comment: People are dying on SR 85. MAG needs to think of the bottom part of the county and not just the top. Rural roadways are also necessary.

Response: Major improvements to SR 85 have already been scheduled for construction. The planned and programmed improvements will upgrade SR 85 to a four-lane divided highway. More information on planned improvements is available at <http://www.dot.state.az.us/ROADS/sr85/index.htm>.

Comments made by Steve Dreiseszun, Citizen

Comment: I am the chairman of the FQ Story Inner Loop Action Committee. This segment of I-10 is the fifth busiest in the state, and impacts have not been mitigated. There are three mitigation solutions that could help our area: rubberized asphalt, noise barriers and rerouting heavy truck traffic from the inner loop to I-17.

Response: ADOT is currently preparing a formal response to this question and will have a written response available in an addendum to this report for the Regional Council meeting on March 26, 2003.

Comment: In December of 2002, 115 miles were in the plan for rubberized asphalt improvements to mitigate noise. However, the original plan excluded the inner loop of I-10. The map dates January 15 has expanded the installation to include segments of I-10, but isn't slated until FY 2006. The segment in the FQ Story area deserves to be included in the FY 2004 plan, because the segment ranked fifth heaviest in traffic, ahead of Loop 202 and Loop 101. The only reason the Story segment is on the map is that additional sound walls will be eliminated and applied to the asphalt cost. There will be a four decibel noise reduction from rubberized asphalt. Right now, our segment is recorded as 70 decibels, with installation of rubberized asphalt, that still leaves us at a 66 decibel level. The sooner the installation takes place, the better. Our segment should be first.

Response: ADOT is currently preparing a formal response to this question and will have a written response available in an addendum to this report for the Regional Council meeting on March 26, 2003.

Comments made by Joe Ryan, Citizen

Comment: There is \$1 billion in the current program, of which \$34 million is for rubberized asphalt. This will affect park-and-ride programs, because money was found there for rubberized asphalt. In dire times, money should be applied to something that has more value than applying rubberized asphalt on new roadways.

Response: ADOT is currently preparing a formal response to this question and will have a written response available in an addendum to this report for the Regional Council meeting on March 26, 2003.

Comments received at February 26, 2003 Regional Council meeting

Comments made by Steve Dreiseszun, Citizen

Comment: Rubberized asphalt will help with noise mitigation (in the FQ Story I-10 Inner Loop), but will not handle all the mitigation. Noise levels exceed both the federal and state levels. Noise walls of sufficient height are needed to block not only noise, but the sight of trucks as well.

Response: ADOT is currently preparing a formal response to this question and will have a written response available in an addendum to this report for the Regional Council meeting on March 26, 2003.

Comments made by William “Blue” Crowley, Citizen

Comment: There needs to be a bus route on 51st Avenue, north of Camelback Road.

Response: The cities of Phoenix, Glendale, Peoria and Valley Metro/RPTA are currently working on restructuring options to replace the service on Grand Avenue. This is necessary due to the restructuring of major intersections on Grand Avenue and safety concerns of bus stops on Burlington Northern/Santa Fe Railroad property. One of the options being considered is to create a Route 51 that would travel between Roosevelt and potentially to Thunderbird on 51st Avenue. At this point, staff members of the agencies are examining what can be done with the existing budget from the Yellow line resources. A Public Involvement Process will be undertaken before any changes would be made, perhaps by October, 2003.

Comment: I would like to see a cooperative effort to get heavy rail to Scottsdale and Fountain Hills as part of commuter rail traffic.

Response: Early last year, MAG initiated the High Capacity Transit Plan Study to evaluate the possible use of existing railroad corridors for commuter rail, estimate the costs and benefits of this service, and assess how it would interact with other types of transit (such as buses) and roadways. The study is also recommending other high capacity transit technologies, including light rail and/or bus rapid transit, in other highly-traveled corridors.

The study is expected to be completed by April, 2003 and integrated with development of the new Regional Transportation Plan.

Although this study did not consider commuter rail in new corridors (this aspect was not addressed in the consultant's work scope), the Cities of Scottsdale and Tempe, MAG and Valley Metro/RPTA recently completed a major investment study to examine a high capacity transit connection between the two cities that would also connect with the Central Phoenix/East Valley Light Rail transit line. This study recommended a high capacity transit alternative along Scottsdale Road.

Comment: The only way to get goods out of the Phoenix area currently is west to Los Angeles or south through Texas. I would like to see the channelization of the Gila River and the port of Rocky Point, Mexico.

Response: MAG is currently in the process of conducting a comprehensive *Regional Freight Analysis*, which will address the primary freight modes of trucking, air cargo, rail and regional pipelines. This study will be completed over the next five to six months, and will serve as the initial basis for future freight planning efforts. The findings of this study will also be incorporated into the Regional Transportation Plan.

At present, due to the lack of any existing water transport activities within the region, the concept of channelizing the Gila River for the purposes of goods movement is not a cost-effective use of public or private funds. Water transport is not a viable form of transporting goods in the central Arizona region due to severe environmental constraints, and it is not anticipated that water transport activities will feasibly become part of future freight planning efforts. The majority of freight movements to, from, within and throughout the MAG Region are conducted by the trucking industry, which has a sufficient transportation road network to effectively transport goods in any direction.

Comment: When will the cutoff on Vulture Mine Road in Wickenburg be done?

Response: ADOT is currently preparing a formal response to this question and will have a written response available in an addendum to this report for the Regional Council meeting on March 26, 2003.

Comment: When freeways are constructed, park-and-rides must be done. If you know where the freeways are going, why don't you know where the park-and-ride lots are going?

Response: MAG completed a regional Park and Ride Plan in January 2001. Twenty park and ride lots were located across the region to support express bus service and car and van pools using regional freeways. The Park and Ride Plan is updated as needed with each update of

the Regional Transportation Plan. The current Park and Ride Plan is included in the 2002 update of the MAG Long Range Transportation Plan, which may be viewed at www.mag.maricopa.gov, under "Transportation," and "Long Range Transportation Plan." A copy of the January 2001 MAG Park and Ride Study is also available on the MAG Web site, or by request through the MAG office.

Comment: I see that the project list calls for a grade separated structure at I-17 and the Grand Canal at a cost of \$3.5 million. At Glendale and 43rd Avenue, a tunnel will be constructed at one third the cost. I never asked for a grade separated system at I-17 and Grand Canal, but requested a tunnel all along.

Response: At the current time, the City of Phoenix' position is that a tunnel at I-17 and Grand Canal is cost prohibitive. The structure will be built to accommodate any future widening of the freeway.

Comments made by Joe Ryan, Citizen

Comment: Most air pollution is created when cars are idling and starting, therefore, pollution is increased by traffic congestion. A lower level of pollution is a goal. Hydrocarbon burning vehicles are a problem and fuel cell cars will not be around in 20 years.

Response: New federal controls in the form of cleaner engines and fuels will reduce pollution into the future during all vehicle operations, including idling and starting. Most immediate on the horizon will be more stringent federal Tier 2 standards for light and medium duty vehicles (including SUVs) and low sulfur gasoline that will be in effect beginning in 2004. Based on federal Heavy-Duty Engine and Vehicle Standards and Highway Diesel Fuel Sulfur Control Requirements, refiners will start production of low sulfur diesel beginning in 2006 and manufacturers will start the phase-in of new standards for heavy-duty engines and vehicles for beginning with model year 2007.

Comment: There are safety concerns with the present configuration of the light rail vehicles operating in the middle of the street, rather than in the curb lane, as buses do currently.

Response: Research by the American Public Transportation Association shows that light rail is one of the safest forms of transportation in the United States and has fewer accidents per passenger mile than autos or buses. One reason for rail's high safety factor is that it operates in its own lane separate from automobile traffic.

Comments received at the March 6, 2003 Joint Agency Transportation Open House and Public Hearing (Note: Comments may be paraphrased for reader convenience. Please refer to the formal transcript as indicated by the page numbers after the comment for the exact content or context of each comment.)

Comments made by Joe Ryan, Citizen

Comment: You need to create multi-modal transit terminals for different types of buses and other transit systems? (Page numbers 30-36)

Response: Valley Metro is aggressively moving forward with the development of intermodal facilities as part of the Light Rail Transit (LRT) project and is also identifying future intermodal passenger facility investments through the Regional Transit System (RTS) Study, currently in progress. Intermodal connectivity is a major emphasis of the LRT project and will be implemented through the construction of key connections between the LRT corridor and the region's bus network during the project's development. In addition, funding for ten regional park & ride facilities have also been programmed.

The RTS Study will continue this intermodal focus. The study will identify additional intermodal passenger facility investments that will be undertaken over the next twenty years. The RTS Study will update the current Long Range Transit Plan and will provide input to the transit element of the Regional Transportation Plan being developed by the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG).

The RTP will provide the foundation for subsequent updates of the five year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). An underlying premise of both the RTS Study and the RTP is to provide the residents of the region with transportation options that will meet the needs of all residents.

Comment: To make Arizona great, we need rapid transit.(Pages 31-32)

Response: Early last year, MAG initiated the High Capacity Transit Plan Study to evaluate the possible use of existing railroad corridors for commuter rail, estimate the costs and benefits of this service, and assess how it would interact with other types of transit (such as buses) and roadways. The study is also recommending other high capacity transit

technologies, including light rail and/or bus rapid transit, in other highly-traveled corridors. The study is expected to be completed by April, 2003 and integrated with development of the new Regional Transportation Plan.

Comment: Would you believe I've seen six different pictures of stations sitting right down at 411 Central. None of those pictures shows the trolley car in the middle of the street. Where's the plan?
(Pages 32-33)

Response: Valley Metro Rail is currently preparing a formal response to this question and will have a written response available in an addendum to this report for the Regional Council meeting on March 26, 2003.

Comment: What you want to do is design a system of rapid transportation using private funds, stay away from federal funds. (Pages 33-36)

Response: In general, any transportation system is designed, constructed and maintained with public funds, whether they be from federal or local sources. Both roadways and transit options have significant initial investments in capital infrastructure. Typically both federal and local funding sources are used for funding the capital portion of transportation projects.

Comments made by Judy Tucker, Citizen

Comment: We need to prevent the addition of triple-trailer trucks on Arizona's highways.
(Page 35-36)

Response: There is a bill before congress proposing to open up the entire National Highway System to triple-trailers. A number of road safety organizations are currently lobbying against making this change. Allowing triple-trailer trucks on the region's highways is likely to adversely impact safety for a number of reasons. Already crowded freeways in urban regions will have greater difficulty accommodating the proposed larger truck configurations. These trucks pose an increased risk to vehicles in adjacent lanes in that they will restrict the ability to read freeway exit signs and other advisory or warning signs. They also have poor stability performance when compared with double trailers currently on the region's freeways. The heavier trucks will also cause more damage to pavements and particularly contribute to accelerated deterioration of the planned rubberized asphalt layer on the freeways. The region's freeways that will be impacted are: I-10; I-17; US60; Loop 202; SR 87; and SR 93. This issue will be discussed by the MAG Safety Stakeholders Group at the April 10, 2003 meeting and possibly generate a recommendation for a letter from MAG to our congressional delegation opposing this measure.

Comments made by Pat Briody, Citizen

Comment: Arizona should look into getting large tow trucks with big bumpers, known as minutemen in other states, that can remove accident debris from the highway to the next available exit to make it safer for motorists. (Pages 37-38)

Response: The Freeway Service Patrol Program (our counterpart to Minutemen of Chicago) launched by MAG in 2001, currently has seven vans and one truck fully equipped with big bumpers to push stalled vehicles and road debris off the freeway. The next generation of vehicles for this program is planned to be large trucks also equipped with push bumpers and many other equipment to provide services to motorists stranded on the region's freeway system.

Comments made by Wolfgang Klein, Citizen

Comment: Are there plans to extend the South Mountain Freeway west, not just to I-10, but all the way up to 85 and connect to I-10 at that point? (Page 38-39)

Response: Studies currently underway for the southwest portion of the region are reviewing options for improvements to all major facilities, including South Mountain. Specific recommendations have not been finalized yet. One option under consideration is to construct a freeway south of and parallel to I-10. This I-10 reliever could run from I-17 to SR 85. More information on this option may be found on the MAG Southwest Area Transportation Study Web site, located at www.mag.maricopa.gov, under "Transportation" and "Regional Transportation Plan." More information on options on the South Mountain facility specifically may be found on the ADOT Web site at: <http://www.dot.state.az.us/ROADS/SouthMtn/index.htm>.

Comments made by William "Blue" Crowley, Citizen

Comment: MAG and the State Board should get on the same page as the county and do the bicycle routes and all upgrades because it adds to pavement preservation. (Page 39-40)

Response: The MAG Regional Bicycle Plan, adopted by the Regional Council, supports creating bicycle lanes. For example, Objective 2 under the Engineering and Planning Goal states: "Re-stripe existing roadways, when feasible, to gain space for bike lanes or edgeline buffer zones. Widen curb lanes during reconstruction or re-paving to provide space for bike lanes or edgeline buffer zones. Include bicycle lanes in all new arterial roadway construction and selected collector street construction. One way to accomplish this on a consistent basis

is to adopt street cross sections with space for bike lanes.”

Comment: I don’t see where Grand Avenue is being multi-modal.

Response: Providing bicycle lanes is important. Right-of-way widths for many streets are very limited, including many portions of Grand Avenue, which make the provision of safe, dedicated and continuous bicycle lanes difficult. Providing sidewalks that have a lateral separation from the roadway are also important in providing mobility for pedestrians. MAG has been active in pedestrian planning and its efforts include publication of the MAG Pedestrian Area Policies and Design Guidelines and the Pedestrian Plan 2000. Currently the issues along Grand Avenue that are impacting transit and are being addressed include:

- Construction: To ease traffic congestion along the Grand Avenue Corridor, seven of its troublesome six-legged intersections will be eliminated and a new link between Grand Avenue and Loop 101 Agua Fria Freeway will be provided. Construction began late last year and will continue through the end of 2006. This construction program has affected transit service along Grand Avenue as well as connecting intersections. Most intersections have been programmed as overpasses except 59th Avenue. Currently Grand Avenue is not pedestrian friendly. Once the reconstruction is complete it may even be less friendly. Valley Metro has been addressing transit options along the Grand Avenue corridor, but at this time no decisions have been made.
- Bus stops encroaching railroad property: Valley Metro has been working with Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) Railroad regarding its concerns of bus stops encroaching on railroad property. Certain bus stops have been identified along the corridor for either improvements or removal.

Comment: Right now, our biggest problem is the lack of maintenance of the rural highway system. (Page 40)

Response: ADOT is currently preparing a formal response to this question and will have a written response available in an addendum to this report for the Regional Council meeting on March 26, 2003.

Comment: I looked at your document and it has the Wickenburg cutoff. Is that going to be the CANAMEX part of the equation or is it just going to be a loop on the outside going across Soles Wash? (Page 40-41)

Response: ADOT is currently preparing a formal response to this question and will have a

III. JOINT TRANSPORTATION AGENCY PUBLIC HEARING AGENDA AND TRANSCRIPT

written response available in an addendum to this report for the Regional Council meeting on March 26, 2003.

Comment: You've got almost 80 miles of freeway that you're doing, and I don't see future park-and-ride lots planned. (Page 41)

Response: The MAG Regional Council adopted the Park-and-Ride Study in January, 2001. The study identifies a regional system of park-and-ride lots to support the regional express bus system, carpooling and vanpooling. The recommended system includes ten sites for near-term development (in the next five-year program) and ten sites for long-term development. Additional recommendations address design guidelines and criteria for development, a management and operations plan for the lots, and programming and implementation strategies. Several park-and-ride lots are programmed for design and construction in the MAG region.

Comment: If you look at the bus book, there's a misprint, it starts on 7th Avenue and goes to the route 50 and starts all over again. I picked these up off the buses.

Response: Although every attempt is made to ensure accuracy, it is possible that there is a misprint in the bus book. Misprints can be fixed in the next issue of the document.

APPENDIX A

PUBLICITY MATERIALS

TRANSPORTATION PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

MAG at the Mall
Saturday, March 1
 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Metrocenter Mall, in front of "Old Navy,"

Open House
Thursday, March 6
 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Public Hearing
Thursday, March 6
 1:00 p.m.
 MAG Offices

Sponsors:



206 South 17th Avenue, Phoenix, AZ 85007
 Telephone (602) 712-7519, Fax (602) 712-8001
 Mail Drop, 118-A
 Visit our Web site at: www.dot.state.az.us

TRANSPORTATION



You are the vital link that sets transportation plans into action

The Vital Link

A critical part of this process is hearing from members of the public who will use these facilities. That's why the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT), Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG), and Valley Metro, get together many times throughout the year to offer Valley residents an opportunity to provide input on these plans. Other opportunities include "MAG at the Mall" and an open house before the public hearing.

MAG at the Mall

Saturday, March 1, 2002, 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Come visit ADOT, MAG, Valley Metro and Valley Metro Rail at Metrocenter Mall, in front of the "Old Navy" department store.

Open House and Public Hearing

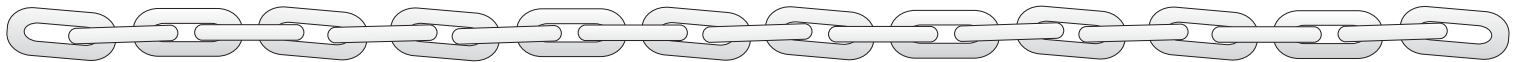
Thursday, March 6, 2003
Open House: 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.
Public Hearing: 1:00 p.m.
Maricopa Association of Governments offices:
302 North 1st Avenue, Phoenix, 2nd floor, Saguaro Room.

A Unique Opportunity

At the public hearing, the State Transportation Board, the Citizens Transportation Oversight Committee, MAG representatives and Valley Metro/RPTA representatives will be on hand to listen to your thoughts and ideas on transportation. In fact, this is the only hearing that the Board will hold in the Maricopa region. The State Transportation Board is responsible for determining which state highway routes are accepted into the state highway system, and which are to be improved. If you have a comment you want the Board to hear, now is your chance!

You are encouraged to comment on the following:

- ❖ 2004-2008 Tentative Five-Year Construction Program of State Highways, including projects in the MAG Region
- ❖ FY 2004-2007 MAG Area Freeway Life Cycle Program for the MAG Regional Freeway System
- ❖ 2004-2008 Tentative Airport Development Program
- ❖ 2002-2006 RPTA/Valley Metro Short Range Transit Report



Location and Parking

The MAG offices are located in the building across the street from the Central Station transit facility, on the northwest corner of 1st Avenue and Van Buren.

Parking is available under the building and will be validated.

Please lock your bicycles in the rack at the entrance to the

Transit

Bus fares will be reimbursed with a valid transfer.

To obtain information on transit service to Central Station, please call Valley Metro at 602-253-5000.

Sponsors:



Information

For more information about these meetings call Jason Stephens, 602-254-6300.

Spanish language assistance is also available at 602-452-5076.



Accessibility

Persons with a disability may request a reasonable accommodation by calling MAG at 602-254-6300. Requests should be made as early as possible to allow time to arrange the accommodation.

Telephone teletype is available through Arizona Relay Service at 1-800-367-8939 (Voice: 1-800-842-4681).

APPENDIX B

CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED DURING THE CONTINUOUS INVOLVEMENT PHASE AND SINCE THE FY 2003 EARLY PHASE INPUT OPPORTUNITY REPORT

APPENDIX B

CORRESPONDENCE DURING CONTINUOUS INVOLVEMENT AND SINCE THE FY 2002 FINAL PHASE INPUT OPPORTUNITY REPORT

ADDENDUM TO DRAFT FY 2003 MID-PHASE INPUT OPPORTUNITY REPORT

Comments made by Bob McKnight, Citizen

Comment: The trolley cannot go beneath Washington Street the way it is presently configured.

Response: The Light Rail Vehicle has the ability to traverse up to and including six percent grades. The current grade at the Civic Plaza is less than six percent. The vehicle, including its pantograph and the Overhead Catenary (wire) System attached to the Plaza overhead, have enough clearance to perform satisfactorily.

Comments made by Joe Ryan, Citizen

Comment: Would you believe I've seen six different pictures of stations sitting right down at 411 Central. None of those pictures shows the trolley car in the middle of the street. Where's the plan?

Response: The current roadway configuration plan for Central Ave. (from Roosevelt to Van Buren) includes the following from West to East:

- Frontage road trackway
- Three through traffic lanes
- Curve lines will be widened approximately 4' on each side (west & east)

Comment: There is \$1 billion in the current program, of which \$34 million is for rubberized asphalt. This will affect park-and-ride programs, because money was found there for rubberized asphalt. In dire times, money should be applied to something that has more value than applying rubberized asphalt on new roadways.

Response: The decision to reprioritize projects in the five-year program to fund the rubberized asphalt overlays resulted from our customer pleas to the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT), the Maricopa Association of Governments(MAG) and cities in the Valley to provide better noise mitigation throughout our freeway system. The results from rubberized asphalt overlays for pavement preservation on I-17 and US60 have convinced motorists and citizens living near freeways that this product also provides better noise mitigation. A cooperative decision between MAG, ADOT and cities in the region determined which projects would be deferred in order to fund these asphalt rubber projects. Nearly half of the funding will come from unprogrammed federal funds.

Comments made by Dianne Post, Citizen

Comment: There are higher priorities than re-paving the freeways with rubberized asphalt. Human needs far surpass the need for less noise.

Response: The funding sources for the repaving freeways with rubberized asphalt are specifically dedicated for transportation improvement and cannot be used for other purposes.

Comments made by William “Blue” Crowley, Citizen

Comment: Adding rubberized asphalt to the system is a problem because it lasts only six years, while concrete lasts 10 years.

Response: ADOT has been using rubberized asphalt products since the early 1980s. Over the years improvements to the product have been made. ADOT has a number of projects where the asphalt rubber product has lasted 10 or more years. It is our expectation that the freeway resurfacing with asphalt rubber will last from 10 to 12 years.

Comment: Right now, our biggest problem is the lack of maintenance of the rural highway system.

Response: Maintenance funding is a serious concern at ADOT. Recent state budget reductions have impacted our appropriated maintenance budgets. ADOT is reviewing how to provide the best maintenance service with our very limited budgets.

Comment: I looked at your document and it has the Wickenburg cutoff. Is that going to be the CANAMEX part of the equation or is it just going to be a loop on the outside going across Soles Wash?

Response: A 2001 study to locate the alignment of the CANAMEX corridor in the Phoenix Metropolitan area identified an alignment that would follow the Wickenburg Road / Vulture Mine Road alignment, connecting to the planned Wickenburg Bypass south of Wickenburg as the preferred alignment. No formal action to officially identify this alignment as the CANAMEX corridor has been taken.

Comment: When will the cutoff on Vulture Mine Road in Wickenburg be done?

Response: This project has not been programmed and it is not known at this time when it might be built.

Comments made by Steve Dreiseszun, Citizen

Comment: I am the chairman of the FQ Story Inner Loop Action Committee. This segment of I-10 is the fifth busiest in the state, and impacts have not been mitigated. There are three mitigation solutions that could help our area: rubberized asphalt, noise barriers and rerouting heavy truck traffic from the inner loop to I-17.

Response: The FY 2004-2008 program will include a project on I-10 between approximately 17th Avenue and Van Buren, scheduled for FY 2006. It is believed that the rubberized

asphalt will reduce noise levels by at least 4 decibels, which should lower noise levels in the FQ Story neighborhood below the ADOT standard of 64 decibels. ADOT will be working with the City of Phoenix to see if that schedule can be accelerated.

Comment: In December of 2002, 115 miles were in the plan for rubberized asphalt improvements to mitigate noise. However, the original plan excluded the inner loop of I-10. The map dated January 15 has expanded the installation to include segments of I-10, but isn't slated until FY 2006. The segment in the FQ Story area deserves to be included in the FY 2004 plan, because the segment ranked fifth heaviest in traffic, ahead of Loop 202 and Loop 101. The only reason the Story segment is on the map is that additional sound walls will be eliminated and applied to the asphalt cost. There will be a four decibel noise reduction from rubberized asphalt. Right now, our segment is recorded as 70 decibels, with installation of rubberized asphalt, that still leaves us at a 66 decibel level. The sooner the installation takes place, the better. Our segment should be first.

Response: The FY 2004-2008 program will include a project on I-10 between approximately 17th Avenue and Van Buren, schedule for FY 2006. It is believed that the asphalt rubber will reduce noise levels by at least four decibels, which should lower noise levels in the FQ Story neighborhood below the ADOT standard of 64 decibels. ADOT will be working with the City of Phoenix to see if that schedule can be accelerated.

Comment: Rubberized asphalt will help with noise mitigation (in the FQ Story I-10 Inner Loop), but will not handle all the mitigation. Noise levels exceed both the federal and state levels. Noise walls of sufficient height are needed to block not only noise, but the sight of trucks as well.

Response: The FY 2004-2008 program will include a project on I-10 between approximately 17th Avenue and Van Buren, schedule for FY 2006. It is believed that the rubberized asphalt will reduce noise levels by at least 4 decibels, which should lower noise levels in the FQ Story neighborhood below the ADOT standard of 64 decibels.